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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/664,446	09/18/2003	Takatomo Nishino	09792909-5672	4529

26263 7590 10/03/2006

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EXAMINER	
DOVE, TRACY MAE	
ART UNIT	**PAPER NUMBER**
1745	

DATE MAILED: 10/03/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/664,446	NISHINO ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Tracy Dove	1745	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *18 September 2003*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-12* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-12* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Priority

Acknowledgment is made of applicant's claim for priority under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d) based upon an application filed in Japan on 9/17/02. A claim for priority under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d) cannot be based on said application, since the United States application was filed more than twelve months thereafter. Examiner points out that while the preliminary amendment filed on 9/18/03 has amended to specification to recite "priority under 35 U.S.C. 119 is not claimed", the declaration/oath filed on 3/8/04 does not indicate priority is not being claimed (box on page 2 is not checked). Appropriate correction is required.

Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

> The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 6 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 6 and 12 recite the limitation "the mass ratio". There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claims.

Claims Analysis

Claim 1 recites "applying a compressive force and a shearing force to at least part of a surface", which is not given patentable weight because it is a product-by-process limitation. Claim 7 also recites this limitation.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –
>
> (b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.
>
> (e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kawakami et al., US 6,432,585.

Kawakami teaches a battery comprising an anode, a cathode and an electrolyte. The anode comprises an anode structural body 10. The structural body comprises a host material 101 in an amount of 50 wt% of more. If the electrode structural body is used in a lithium battery, the host material comprises one or more elements selected from the group consisting of Si, Sn and In (11:1-18). When Si is used as the host material, Cu, Ni, Ag or Sn may partially cover the surface of the Si particles (11:30-67). Si may contain an impurity such as Al, Ca, Cr, Fe, Mg, Mn or Ni to decrease the electric resistance of the electrode material layer 102 (12:1-5). The layer 102 may comprise the host material 101 and an electrically conductive auxiliary in order to assist and increase the electron conduction among particles of the host material or that between the host material and the collector. It is preferred the electrically conductive auxiliary be contained in an amount of 1-30 wt%. The electrically conductive auxiliary may be a carbonaceous material such as acetylene black, ketjen black or graphite. The electrically conductive auxiliary may be in a filament-like, fibrous or needle-like form. The host material and carbonaceous material are mechanically mixed using a ball mill or the like (compressive/shearing force) (12:46-13:9). See also column 19, line 50-column 20, line 23. See also Example 12.

Thus the claims are anticipated.

*

Claims 1, 3-7 and 9-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Suzuki et al., US 6,413,672.

Suzuki teaches a lithium battery comprising an anode, a cathode and an electrolyte. The anode comprises an anode material containing 50-99 wt% of silicon and 1-50 wt% of carbon

material (abstract). It is preferable that silicon exists in the form of particles and the particles are covered with the carbonaceous material. A material containing a high proportion of silicon provides a high capacity (2:52-67). An amount of 70 wt% or more of silicon is preferred (5:7-9). The carbonaceous material may be graphite, amorphous carbon (acetylene black) or a mixture thereof. For example, coke, natural graphite, artificial graphite, carbonized pitch or a mixture thereof may be used (5:16-22). Embodiment 1 teaches 28.5 parts by weight silicon and 7 parts by weight graphite were mixed and then processed in a vibration mill (compressive/shearing).

Thus the claims are anticipated.

*

Claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Suzuki et al., US 6,171,725.

Suzuki teaches a battery comprising a positive electrode, a negative electrode and an electrolyte. The negative electrode includes a negative electrode material containing 30-90 wt% of silicon and 10-70 wt% of carbon (abstract). The carbon material may be cokes, graphite (artificial graphite) and the like (3:14-21). The silicon/carbon composite material preferably comprises 50-90 wt% silicon and 10-50 wt% carbon (3:22-63). Example 4 teaches silicon powder was mixed with graphite/pitch. After calcining, the solid material was roughly milled (compressed/sheared). Through dry milling, a silicon/carbon composite powder was obtained.

Thus the claims are anticipated.

*

Claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e)/103(a) as being anticipated by Inoue et al., US 6,506,520.

Inoue teaches a negative electrode for a nonaqueous secondary battery comprising composite particles (abstract). The composite particles include a core phase A and an outer phase B. When phase A is Sn, phase B may be Sn-Fe, Sn-Zn, Sn-In or Sn-Pb. When phase A is Si, phase B may be Si-Co, Si-Ni, Si-Zn or Si-Al (Table 1). A conductive material may be contained in the negative electrode. Among conductive materials, synthetic (artificial) graphite, acetylene black and carbon fibers are especially favorable. The amount of conductive material in the negative electrode is preferably 1-30% of the negative electrode materials (composite particles) (5:50-6:3).

Thus the claims are anticipated. The claims are alternatively unpatentable because the courts have ruled that product-by-process limitations, in the absence of unexpected results are obvious. Inoue does not explicitly state a compressive and/or shearing force is applied to the negative electrode material, however, the negative electrode material of the claimed invention and the negative electrode of the prior art appear to be the same.

*

Claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Takami et al., US 6,350,544.

Takami teaches a lithium battery comprising a carbonaceous material as the negative electrode material. Example 6 teaches the carbonaceous material was prepared by adding magnesium silicide to mesophase pitch to prepare a homogeneous dispersion. The fibers were carbonized and then the carbonized product was milled (compressed/sheared) to obtain milled fibers. The milled fibers were graphitized to manufacture milled carbon fibers. The carbon

fibers thus obtained contained 4% in atomic ratio of magnesium and 2% in atomic ratio of silicon (22:58-23:25). Thus the claims are anticipated.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tracy Dove whose telephone number is 571-272-1285. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday (9:00-7:30).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Pat Ryan can be reached on 571-272-1292. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

September 28, 2006

TRACY DOVE
PRIMARY EXAMINER